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Of Human Vanity

The First in a Series of Studies "Of Things Most Surely Believed"

By the REV. HENRY W. CORAY

Stated Supply of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Long Beach, California

VANITY of vanities, all is vanity", quoth the philosopher-preacher. The word translated "vanity" derives from the Hebrew "breath" or "breathing". The principal thought in this "under the sun" or earthly philosophy is that of life's total emptiness and unreality. The writer ought to have known. As Israel's king he gave his heart to search out by wisdom concerning all things done under heaven. He concluded that it was but "a striving after wind". He then looked for satisfaction in the pursuit of pleasure. He amassed a huge fortune, built houses, planted vineyards, cultivated gardens and groves, dimpled his lawns with pools of water. He hired legions of servants and musicians. Whatsoever his eyes desired he kept not from them, neither withheld his heart from any joy. Result: "All is vanity and a striving after wind and there is no profit under the sun".

You may have read Tchekov's story of the rich lawyer who laid a wager of two million dollars with a friend that he could remain fifteen years in voluntary confinement. His friend accepted the wager. Five minutes before he was to receive the two million dollars the self-sentenced prisoner walked out of the prison and forfeited the money. He left a note in his cell which read, "For fifteen years I have diligently studied earthly life. . . . In your books I cast myself into bottomless abysses, worked miracles, burned cities to the ground, preached new religions, conquered whole countries.

Your books gave me wisdom. All your unwearying human thought created in the centuries is compressed into a little lump in my skull. I know that I am cleverer than you all. And I despise your books, despise all your worldly blessings and wisdom. Everything is void, frail, visionary and delusive like a mirage".

Men wonder if there is a final standard of truth. Is there a fixed point in the universe? Whence came we? Why are we here? Whither are we going? Twelve centuries ago the Venerable Bede likened human life to a bird flying through a warm hall in which men sit feasting while the storms rage without. "The bird is safe from the tempest for a brief moment but immediately passes from winter to winter again. So man's life appears for a little while but of what follows or of what went before we know nothing. If therefore a new doctrine tells us something certain it seems to deserve to be followed". Most honest scientists and philosophers are unwilling to say, "Ah, sweet mystery of life, at last I've found you". Sir James Jeans, for instance, admits that "science cannot at present hope to say anything final on the questions of human existence and human destiny". Confucius' disciples used to hear him say cryptically, "Don't know life, how know death?"

Now if the wisdom of the world cannot explain life, it logically follows that those who have only worldly wisdom cannot really enjoy life. The king of Israel turned away from the fountains of pleasure unfilled

and from his coffers dissatisfied. "Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful". The pleasures of earth are of necessity seasonable. They cannot endure. They have been compared by a Scottish divine to a Hindu widow who sits upon the funeral pile with her dead husband and sings songs of joy while men are setting fire to the wood with which she is to be burned. How can we be truly happy when everything we hold dear may be swept away in the twinkling of an eye? Or when this very night we may be in hell?

"Lips are laughing, but eyes are wet,
Hearts are breaking in Vanity Fair."

The present world upheaval has plunged masses of people into utter despair. "Why is all this come upon us?" it is asked. Or, "To what purpose is this mass murder?" And, "How will it all end?" Some there are who feel the situation to be so hopeless that it will be well if this rotten civilization of ours destroys itself so that a new civilization may rise upon the embers of the present order. For our part, we believe that there is a better solution. In fact we are persuaded that, unless there should occur that glorious event "toward which the whole creation moves", it is the only solution.

A Ford of ancient vintage was stalled on the highway. Its possessor stood glowering disgustedly at his perennial headache when there stopped beside him a shining Lincoln. The driver inquired pleasantly if he could be of any assistance. Upon being assured that he could, he walked to the Ford, lifted the radiator hood, twisted a certain gadget, turned the crank, and life returned to the engine. "Thanks a lot", said the overjoyed Ford owner, extending his hand; "may I ask to whom I am indebted?" Said the modern Samaritan, "Henry Ford".

I think the lesson is abundantly clear. We are in exactly the same situation as the stalled Ford. Are we to be repaired? Then the work must be performed by our Designer and Maker. Is life to have significance? The 1942 prodigal must first come to himself and return in penitence to the Word of God and to the God of the Word, God our Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, even the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. The cross of Christ, you see, not only preaches pardon for sin and a peace that en-

dureth, but it also interprets all life and gives it a wealth of meaning. "Ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ", wrote Peter.

"Life, before the death of Christ has touched it, is vain, it is futile, it is a groping or fumbling after something it cannot find; it has no abiding fruit. From this subjection to vanity it is redeemed by the blood of Christ. When the power of Christ's Passion enters into any life it is not futile any more; there is no more the need or the inclination to cry, 'All is vanity'." Come then, ye weary and heavy laden, ye languid and sore distressed, ye puzzled and perplexed, look away trustingly to the Christ of Calvary. Then not only will you receive redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace, but you will also be enriched in all utterance and in all knowledge and, even though living in a world gone mad, joyfully you will cry, "The Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding".

(The next article in this series of studies "Of Things Most Surely Believed" will appear in an early issue.)

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"We Should Consider . . ."

By the REV. SAMUEL J. ALLEN

The Question of Strategy

THE Lord Jesus Christ warned His disciples to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. He referred to the Pharisees who sat in Moses' seat as wolves, and He warned His sheep of vicious persecutions to come.

The Modernists, supported by all others who deny that the Bible is the Word of God, and by all who say they believe that the Bible is the Word of God and yet enjoy fellowship with heretics, are the religious wolves who sit in the seat of authority in Protestantism. They control the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and practically all the large Protestant denominations.

How should we attack the modern religious wolves in sheep's clothing? Shall we hammer recklessly away at the popularly entrenched pagan institutions such as the so-called Christian churches which have degenerated into glorified Rotary Clubs and social societies, the public schools, the clubs, the lodges, and the unions? Shall we refuse to meet this modern paganism and take refuge in the spending of our entire time in winning individuals to Christ? Or shall we pick the weak point in the armor of modern paganism which masquerades as Christianity and hammer away at it?

Undoubtedly we should do all these things, but it is my conviction that we should emphasize the last. What is the weak point of this paganism? It is its failure to popularize the social gospel which is its fetish. The reconstruction of the Christian church so that the social gospel is accepted as the central teaching of Christianity has not been effected. We should pray and work for its continued failure. Our strategy toward these enemies of the gospel should be to publicize their socialism, pacifism, and their enmity toward the American way of life based on the Christian doctrines of the equality of man in the sight of God and the law. We can then proceed to show that every blessing for which we are fighting has come from Biblical Christianity and proceed to hold up Christ as the Saviour and the light of the world.

A Federation of Calvinistic Churches

By the REV. EDWIN H. RIAN

BECAUSE I am keenly interested in a united testimony to the system of truth and the world- and life-view contained in the Bible and expressed in such creeds as the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Heidelberg Catechism, I propose for your consideration a federation of Presbyterian and Reformed churches. It is my hope that these ideas informally stated will fire the imagination of readers and eventually lead to a coöperative effort on the part of truly Calvinistic churches so that a real impact can be made upon American culture.

What would be the nature of such a federation? Negatively stated, it would not be an organic union of churches. Many difficulties and objections might make an organic union impracticable. Furthermore, when each denomination keeps its distinctiveness and independence, much more strength is added to the federation, since the groups then complement one another.

The federation would not be a super-denomination, since it would not perform ecclesiastical functions in the technical sense nor bind the separate churches.

In other words, such a federation would be a coöperative effort based upon the Calvinistic confessions, stressing the principles of those confessions and making known the system of truth taught in the Bible.

What Presbyterian and Reformed churches might form such a federation? There are undoubtedly others, but I mention only four which readily come to mind: The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Christian Reformed Church, the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, and the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America, General Synod.

What projects or coöperative efforts are possible for such a federation? In addition to making a united testimony to the essentials of the Reformed Faith, that is, Biblical Christianity, I mention three distinct enterprises which, if launched and carried forward with energy, can extend the influence of historic Chris-

tianity in America and exercise a telling effect upon American life.

We cannot expect to make headway in this country unless we have an American Christian university based upon Calvinistic principles, where a broad Christian culture encourages students to become men of letters, statesmen, teachers, lawyers, doctors, engineers. Such a university could best be launched under the encouragement of a federation and independent of all denominations, with the board members and professors chosen from among the various Reformed groups. In this way it would make an appeal to students in every church as an American enterprise and at the same time clearly state that the university's doctrinal stand is that of the Reformed Faith. In such a project we have something to claim our best efforts and our highest ideals; unitedly we can perform a task that none of us could do separately.

In the second place, a Reformed Christian literature association is much needed. Such a society could encourage the publication of scholarly and popular expositions of the Word of God which are not being published today because of a lack of funds and stimulus. Furthermore, a

number of heretical groups are conducting a forceful and successful tractarian movement. Millions of these popular tracts are finding their way into the hands of the people and having their effect. Shall we of the Reformed persuasion allow that campaign to go unchallenged? In a united effort we can begin to rival such movements.

Today the radio is one of the greatest means of propoganda, but we of the Calvinistic faith are not exercising the influence we should through this medium. Under the auspices and inspiration of the federation, a national radio broadcast might be undertaken.

All of these plans and many more are in the future, but the three which have been mentioned present a challenge which makes a federation eminently desirable.

I suggest a practical way to bring this federation into existence. Let each general assembly and synod of at least the above-mentioned churches appoint committees to consider and explore the possibilities of such a federation and then report back to their respective churches in 1943. If the federation plan is kindly received and seems practicable it can be launched.

In this hour of crisis and world revolution, when society is in a state of flux and men are looking for some sure word of truth to which to cling, can we afford not to unite our efforts by some method and present the whole counsel of God, the system of truth of the Bible? God has given us a great trust and stewardship in the full-orbed gospel of Jesus Christ but, unless we preach the truth vigorously, widely, and in the language which people understand, we shall have failed in our stewardship.

Shall we in America yield the place of leadership to men who blaspheme the name of Christ and attempt to build our civilization upon the sands of paganism? I say No! Let us lay aside our complacency, reassert our Christian world- and life-view and assume the leadership once more in teaching the people the rule of God in all of life.

MAKE your plans now to attend all sessions of the Christian World Order Conference, sponsored by Westminster Theological Seminary, from April 15th to 17th at the Philomusian Club, 3944 Walnut Street, Philadelphia. Speakers are Dr. R. J. G. McKnight of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, the Rev. John C. Blackburn of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., the Rev. Professor R. B. Kuiper of Westminster Seminary, and the Rev. Henry Schultze, President of Calvin College.

LARGE AUDIENCE CROWDS AUDITORIUM FOR SECOND ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE AT WESTMINSTER SEMINARY

Women's Auxiliary and Men's Committee Report Progress; Woolley and Skilton Featured Speakers; Motion Picture Shown

THE world's première of the new motion picture, "Life at Westminster Seminary", played to a near-capacity crowd of enthusiastic fans at Westminster's second annual open house on Friday evening, February 27th, on the campus at Laverock, near suburban Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia. About two hundred and fifty persons filled nearly every available seat in the seminary's auditorium.

Celebration of the occasion began in the afternoon, when friends of the institution were invited to attend classes and to become acquainted with the normal routine of a seminary day. At 7 P.M. dinner was served to a hundred and ninety-five persons, after which the guests repaired to the library auditorium for the evening meeting.

Presiding was the Rev. Edwin H. Rian, President of the Board of Trustees of the seminary. After the singing of a hymn, the Rev. Professor John Murray read the Scripture lesson from II Timothy 2, and prayer was offered

by the Rev. Professor Edward J. Young. Mr. Rian welcomed the guests on behalf of the seminary, and announced that the mortgage on the buildings and campus had now been fully paid and Westminster was free of debt. This does not mean, however, that the need for financial support is appreciably lessened; there is urgent need for the continued sacrificial loyalty of every friend of the institution.

Mr. Rian introduced Mrs. Frank H. Stevenson, President of the Women's Auxiliary, who told of the work done during the past year by her committee. Mrs. Stevenson announced that successful efforts had been made to start branches of the Auxiliary in churches throughout the country, and that the women were loyally behind the work of Westminster Seminary. She then introduced Mrs. Albert L. Berry, who delivered the financial report of the Women's Auxiliary in the unavoidable absence of the treasurer, Mrs. J. B. Griggs. The report showed that dur-

ing the period from February 1, 1941, to February 27, 1942, the group had given \$7,258.18 to the support of the seminary. It was pointed out that this sum falls short of that which was given in the same period of the previous year, and the members were urged not to relax their efforts. Mrs. Berry also read a number of encouraging extracts from the letters of donors.

Mr. Alfred W. Stapf, President of the Men's Committee, told of a highly successful dinner conference held by the men's group in East Orange and said that the Committee hoped that many more such conferences would be featured in the coming months. He stressed the need for the laymen of the movement to promote the interests of the seminary among their Christian friends by emphasizing the uniqueness of Westminster and its distinctive advantages and testimony. Mr. Murray Forst Thompson, Treasurer of the Men's Committee, reported that eighty-eight donors had contributed \$1,572.50 through the Committee since February, 1941, and that this figure also was much less than that of the previous year.

As the first of the two featured speakers, the Rev. Paul Woolley, Professor of Church History and Registrar of the seminary, told informally of student activities. The chief activity, he said, is still the regular work of the curriculum. But students are also engaged in much worthwhile deputation work. Regular appointments at Philadelphia's Sunday Breakfast Association (a rescue mission work) and at the Convalescent Home in West Philadelphia are a valuable part of the extra-curricular activities. The weekly prayer meeting and the annual Day of Prayer are supplemented by informal prayer meetings in the students' rooms and by the daily chapel service. On Thursday evenings the students are addressed by guest speakers at the Dining Club. Calls for Westminster-trained men, said Professor Woolley, are being received from the Presbyterian Church in Canada and from Presbyterian churches in this country. Eight alumni are now serving in the armed forces of the United States and one in Canada.

The second speaker was the Rev. John H. Skilton, Instructor in New Testament, who chose as the title of his address: "Only the Best Is Good Enough!" He told of the inadequacy of "good" preparations by the European democracies in the face of Nazi



Guests Begin to Assemble Early in Machen Hall

onslaughts, and declared that in spiritual warfare, as well as in physical combat, only the very best preparations are sufficient for the battle. Westminster Seminary, he said, has recognized the character of the all-out warfare brought against Christianity by the forces of modern unbelief, and has sought to give, not just a good, a fair, or a better training, but the best.

The motion picture, "Life at Westminster Seminary", followed Mr. Skilton's address and closed the evening. Carefully prepared, and attractively edited and presented, it gives a graphic and realistic portrayal of every significant phase of the seminary's training and activities, including views of the campus, class rooms, the library, Machen Hall, the students' rooms, and almost every feature of routine student life. Special events, such as opening exercises, the Tenth Annual Commencement services, and the

Thanksgiving Day banquet for students, are also included. The picture runs for about twenty-five minutes, and more than half of it is photographed in full color.

In order to promote interest in Westminster Seminary and its testimony to the full gospel of the Word of God, the Rev. Arthur W. Kuschke, Field Representative of the seminary, is showing the motion picture in about twenty colleges, throughout the South during the month of March, and in at least that many midwest institutions during April. His itinerary will take him as far south as Alabama and as far west as Omaha, Nebraska. Friends of Westminster Seminary who would like to see this unusual motion picture may communicate with the office of the seminary to learn when it will be shown in their vicinity. Local announcements will appear in newspapers of cities on the itinerary.

The Epistle to the Ephesians

By the REV. FLOYD E. HAMILTON

Of Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Los Angeles

Part 2

THE greeting itself follows the salutation in characteristically Pauline manner. "Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ". "Grace" is the unmerited favor of God, but it has a wealth of Biblical connotation that makes it one of the richest words in the Christian vocabulary. It calls to mind the whole plan of salvation for sinful man; all the wonderful redemption which Christ purchased for us by His life of perfect obedience and His death in our place on the cross. Every blessing in the Christian treasure-house is included in the one word "grace", for nothing that a Christian can be, can do or can receive comes to him in any other way than by grace as unmerited gifts from God.

"Peace" has a primary reference to the subjective state of mind of the believer, namely, that he has a peaceful heart; but the objective fact of peace with God as the cause of his internal state of tranquillity is not to be excluded from the word. There can be no serenity nor tranquillity for the man or woman who is not in Christ Jesus, but a "fearful looking forward to judgment" that takes away all in-

ternal peace from his heart. Too many times believers lack this inner state of tranquillity that should be the hallmark of a Christian. We try to bear our own burdens rather than bring them to Christ, and worry is the only possible result.

Then notice that grace and peace come to us from both the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Both are the source of all spiritual blessings, because both are truly God, and both are concerned in everything that concerns the believer's welfare. God is our Father if we are sons by adoption through our trust in Jesus Christ. He is not the Father of unbelieving men and women in the same way that He is the Father of Christians. They rest under His wrath and curse because of their sins. No one who is not a true Christian has a right to pray the Lord's Prayer or any other prayer, except the publican's prayer, "God, be merciful to me a sinner, for Jesus' sake!" The modern doctrine of the fatherhood of God does not come out of the Bible. Oh, to be sure, there is a broad sense in which, as Creator, God can be spoken of as Father, but not in the sense that He loves all men equally as a Father loves His own sons and

daughters. When men and women spurn their Saviour and Redeemer, they prove that they are children of the devil by their rebellion against God (I John 3:8-10).

Notice the term "Lord" Jesus Christ. That word denotes the peculiar relationship of the Christian to Christ—the relationship of a slave to his Master. We who belong to Christ are His property and He is our Lord, that is, the "boss" of our lives. It is difficult to believe that many who call themselves Christians are Christians, because Christ is never accepted as absolute Lord of their lives. They are really their own bosses, and they will obey Christ only if what He demands happens to coincide with what they want to do themselves. Until Christ is recognized and followed as Lord, there is little evidence that they are children of God, or are saved at all.

Paul's salutations leave no doubt in the mind of any reader as to where he stands. One wonders whether the letters which we write would ever be recognized by a stranger as having been written by a believer in Christ? There is much in the verses of this salutation to cause us self-examination. Are we so separated to Christ that we are worthy to be called "saints"? Is it evident to others that we are "faithful", that is, "full of faith" in Christ Jesus? How constantly is God's peace abiding in our own hearts?

I. THE HIGH CALLING OF THE CHURCH. 1:3 to 3:21.

A. The Blessings of the Believer in Christ. 1:3-14.

The longest sentence in the Bible is filled with a description of the marvelous blessings which the believer has in Christ. Just briefly to outline them, they are: election to salvation (v. 4), sanctification and purity (v. 4), adoption as sons of God (v. 5), redemption through Christ (vs. 6-7), forgiveness of our trespasses (v. 7), knowledge of the mysteries of God's will (v. 9), having been made a heritage (v. 11), sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise (v. 13), full realization of every step in the salvation process until we are glorified in heaven (v. 14). This whole paragraph is a hymn of praise to God for what He has done for the believer. The title verse of the paragraph, containing the thought of the whole paragraph, appropriately begins the paragraph.

"Blessed be God, even the Father

of our Lord Jesus Christ". This translation is preferable to that of "the God and Father, etc." There is a puzzling omission in the best manuscript, the Codex Vaticanus, of the words "even the Father", which are found in all the other manuscripts, including the Codex Sinaiticus, the other of the two oldest and best uncial manuscripts of the New Testament. The omission would make the sentences read, "Blessed be the God of our Lord Jesus Christ". The omission can hardly be accounted for on the theory that it was purposely omitted by some scribe who did not believe in the deity of our Lord, for the rest of the phrase, "Lord Jesus Christ", is filled with the thought of the absolute deity of Christ. The Modernists like to speak of "the God of Jesus", and of having "the same faith in God that Jesus had", as though Jesus were a mere man who had to trust in God for His own salvation! However, no Modernist who rejected the deity of Christ would like the phrase, "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ", for that would imply that Jesus was truly the Jewish Messiah, God Incarnate, and also that He was the absolute "Lord" or owner of the one who so called Him Lord, as a slave would call his master! On the whole, therefore, we are inclined to believe that the longer reading, "God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ", is the correct one, and that its omission in one manuscript was due to an oversight on the part of some scribe.

"Blessed". There is a play on words in the Greek that is reproduced in the English translation "Blessed . . . who that blessed us . . . with every spiritual blessing". The first "blessed" represents all that we can do as helpless creatures to ascribe praise to God, while the second "blessed" is active and represents all that God does for us. All we can do is to use a word, while God performs deeds of blessing. God "blesses us in real and life-giving spiritual blessing, i.e., blessing of the gift of the Spirit, for which we can return nothing except thanksgiving" (Ellicott). The gifts, though, are from the Spirit as well as the gift of the Spirit in regeneration.

The apostle then uses a curious expression, translated "in the heavenly [places] in Christ". A better translation would be simply, "in the heavenlies in Christ". But what does the phrase "in the heavenlies" mean?

The phrase is used five times in the epistle, here and in 1:20; 2:6; 3:10; and 6:12, and certainly is not equivalent to the words "in heaven". In 1:20 the Father makes Christ to sit at His right hand "in the heavenlies", which might mean "in heaven", but in 6:12, the spiritual hosts of wickedness are "in the heavenlies", and certainly it is incongruous to think of hosts of wickedness in heaven, especially as we are said to fight against them here and now! Moreover, in 2:6 we are said to be raised with Christ and now sitting with Christ "in the heavenlies", which could hardly be in heaven except in principle. In 3:10 the wisdom of God is made known to the "principalities and powers in the heavenlies", which would hardly be heaven if it is the same principalities and powers of evil mentioned in 6:12. A comparison of all these passages would indicate that Paul is using the phrase, "in the heavenlies", as equivalent to the phrase, "the unseen or spiritual realm", which surrounds us at all times: a sort of fourth dimension in which the powers of evil and the power of God all are manifest at all times, and in which realm we have our spiritual blessings and our warfare against evil.

There is a tremendously important thought for us in this phrase, "in the heavenlies". It lifts us above the realm of sense into another and rarer atmosphere, and makes us realize that we live in two worlds all the time. We are living in the world which we can see and hear, but at the same time we are really living in a world invisible to our eyes, where we are surrounded by terrible forces of evil, or rather, personalities of evil, constantly seeking to do us harm (6:10-12). But in this unseen world, we have protection in our battle against these evil personalities, in the spiritual equipment which God has provided for His elect. One is reminded of the jungle fighting in the East Indies, where the soldiers of the allies are exposed to the attacks of the enemies whom they cannot see in the trees of the jungle. What a terrible thing it would be if we were exposed to these attacks in the unseen world from enemies whom we cannot see, with no protection from the wiles of the devil (6:11)! Praise God He has provided us with invincible armor (6:13), if we will put it on, so that we can "quench all the fiery darts of the evil one"

(6:16)! Moreover God has actually blessed us with every spiritual blessing in this unseen realm! What a shame that the average Christian is so dull of insight that he does not realize the value of these tremendous spiritual blessings here recorded!

One of the greatest modern inventions is the new electronic microscope that enables the scientists to magnify hitherto invisible viruses. These invisible viruses cause many diseases such as influenza and measles, and the new microscope magnifies them to the point of visibility, so that the scientist can fight these diseases in the open, with the hope of final victory over them. There is no spiritual microscope that can enable us to see the powers of evil around us, or the unseen blessings with which God has clothed us and surrounded us, but if we truly believe His promises, we can know that He has provided us already with an invincible armor (6:10-18) which will protect us from the powers of evil far better than the scientist can protect us from these hitherto invisible viruses causing so many baffling diseases.

"In Christ" the Christian is blessed with "all spiritual blessings". That is, he receives blessings from the Spirit of God, in the spiritual realm, in his soul or spirit, that are simply innumerable. They are far above all that we can ask or think, and the list of the principal blessings that follows hardly touches the fringe of our heritage in Christ Jesus our Lord. How terrible it is for men and women to be utterly exposed to all these attacks from the unseen world without "the whole armor of God", all these blessings which the Christian has in Christ! It is like being exposed to bombing and machine gun fire from the clouds, in an open field, when there is a bomb-proof air raid shelter just before us which we are privileged to enter at will! Is it not incomprehensible that men and women will try to fight this hopeless battle against the invisible hosts of wickedness, without this invincible armor of God which He has provided? Christ says, "Come unto me", and yet men stumble on blindly, rejecting the only Saviour and Deliverer, either trying to fight feebly in their own strength against these fiery darts or else succumbing openly to the assaults and becoming "Quislings" in the service of the evil one!

(To Be Continued)

The Presbyterian Guardian

EDITORIAL

A Temporary Committee That Should Never Be Permanent

LAST fall "The American Council of Christian Churches" was announced by leaders of the Bible Presbyterian and Bible Protestant Churches as the answer to the need of American evangelical Protestantism for an organization which would, with certain exceptions, act for conservatives in the way that the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America acts for Modernists. At that time we objected mildly to the way in which the American Council was formed in secret by a small clique of Fundamentalists and then handed, full-blown and take-it-or-leave-it, to the vast army of evangelical Protestantism. We felt, and we still feel, that the combined wisdom of every seasoned leader of every Bible-believing denomination in the country would still have been barely adequate for the task that was being undertaken. Moreover, the records of at least a few of the leaders in the new movement fell far short of assuring us that the American Council would be led soberly and wisely by Christian statesmen toward the accomplishment of the ideal that it had set for itself. We felt that a little group of second lieutenants was attempting a job that would have taxed the combined genius of Douglas MacArthur and Archibald Wavell. In brief, and to be quite frank, we lacked confidence in the judgment of the men who were the announced leaders of the American Council.

One of the purposes of the Council, however, was said to be the combating of the modernist influence of the Federal Council. At no time has there been the slightest doubt but that the American Council was bitterly opposed to the Federal Council and eager to do battle at every turn

with that notoriously pagan organization. We liked that. There was no hedging, no pussyfooting on the issue, no piously evasive double-talk. Whatever else we might not like about the American Council, we knew exactly where it stood on the Federal Council issue: On that issue, at least, little David was polishing off his five smooth stones and openly taking the measure of the modern Goliath.

It might have been expected that opposition of a vigorous sort would have been immediately forthcoming from the minions of the Federal Council. Such, however, was not the case. Feeling itself to be the elephant that was being attacked by the flea, the Federal Council did not bother even to recognize the existence of the new movement. But, surprisingly enough, opposition to the American Council came swiftly from a totally unexpected quarter—from Fundamentalists themselves. In Chicago a round-table discussion was held by a number of prominent Christian leaders, and to that conference came three Bible Presbyterian organizers of the American Council. A stormy session followed, with no hint of agreement between the groups. And immediately thereafter the Chicago leaders announced the "Temporary Committee For United Action Among Evangelicals".

The approach of the Temporary Committee pleased us far better than that of the American Council. Instead of completing every last detail of organization behind closed doors and then asking conservatives to accept the *fait accompli*, the Committee called a meeting of evangelical Protestants at the Hotel Coronado, St. Louis, from April 7th to 9th. We thought that was very democratic of it, and said so in our column in THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN of February 10th.

The purpose of the present editorial, and the reason it is being rushed into print in this our last issue before the convening of the St. Louis meeting, is that we have just come into possession of some disquieting information. This new information seems to indicate that if the ideas of those who thus far have been the leaders of the Temporary Committee are allowed to control the gathering, then militant Christians who can tolerate no compromise or truce with the battalions of unbelief will have to withdraw all support from the movement. Despite all our

catalogued objections to the American Council, we would a hundred times rather throw what little weight of influence we have behind that Council than behind the Temporary Committee.

Why do we dare to make such a sweeping statement as this? The answer is tragically simple: The leaders of the Temporary Committee are determined to compromise on the issue of the Federal Council. They do not want to make a clear ringing testimony against the pagan evils of the Federal Council; to do so, they believe, will "cripple our testimony and dwarf our own souls".

A few weeks ago we addressed a letter to the Rev. Ralph T. Davis, Secretary and Treasurer of the Temporary Committee, asking him three categorical and lucid questions and hoping that we would receive a clear-cut and unequivocal reply. The first question concerned the attitude of the Temporary Committee toward the Federal Council. In his answer Mr. Davis asserted that "the brethren" do not wish to "launch out on some endeavor to condemn". He grants that all who are interested in the movement he represents "have no use for the Federal Council of Churches as such", but declares that they have felt that "to condemn the movement will produce little in the line of lasting results and will but cripple our testimony and dwarf our own souls".

Of course, we agree that the positive note must ever be present in our testimony; but that does not mean that we can side-step the duty to combat error. Obviously Mr. Davis is against controversy as such. He thinks it does more harm than good, and that it produces a bad spiritual effect. This, we submit, is staple indifferentist fare and always has been. We met it in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and those who employed it are still in that unfaithful denomination, compromising in a hundred big and little ways with those who deny the Lord that bought them.

Our second question to Mr. Davis asked whether the Committee would admit to membership only those whose doctrinal soundness was above question. His answer is beautifully evasive, and must be worn down on the emery-wheel of cold analysis before its dangers become visible to the naked eye. Mr. Davis says that those who have gathered together for coun-

sel thus far seem to think that "interpretation of doctrinal basis and the stand that should be taken as to the matter of 'contending for the faith,' as it is popularly stated today, is to be decided by the individual members". He adds that "it shall not be the duty of the organization that shall be set up to be a mouth piece for the individual members in it".

If we understand Mr. Davis aright, he means that some sort of doctrinal basis will be set up at St. Louis. Thereafter, all those who are able to interpret that doctrinal basis in any fashion whatever that enables them to give assent to it, no matter what distortion and violence is thereby done to the original meaning of that doctrinal basis, shall be admitted to full fellowship and confidence. And the extent to which they thereafter "contend for the faith" shall be entirely up to the individuals themselves. A strangely similar concept of doctrinal bases once produced a document known as the Auburn Affirmation!

In passing, it is interesting to note that, in the words quoted above, Mr. Davis has contradicted his representation that no policies have been decided upon in advance, by saying flatly that "it shall not be the duty of the organization that shall be set up to be a mouth piece for the individual members in it". Apparently, at least some of the policies have been decided upon.

Our last question was "Will the ecclesiastical connections of prospective members have any bearing at all upon whether they are admitted, or will you consider only the personal profession of faith made by the candidate?" Mr. Davis again gives us no real answer at all, but in this case he freely admits that this is one of the questions "not fully clear in our mind as yet", and says that it will have to be decided at the St. Louis conference. Our question was inspired by the presence, on the list of those issuing the call to the St. Louis meeting, of at least two members of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Since Mr. Davis also adds that "it is preferable that the membership be made up of those who represent organizations rather than upon an individual basis", we wonder if a single organization such as the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. will be able to be represented, at one and the same time, on both the Federal Council and the

new, supposedly Christian Committee. That would be a little like having the United States represented both in Winston Churchill's war cabinet and Adolf Schickelgruber's gangster councils.

As we go to press, Mr. Davis has just sent a letter to every signer of the call. In it he has openly declared his opposition to militancy. What we have here said is thus not to be considered as an indictment of any of those who, in response to a formal request, allowed their names to be used in issuing that call. Nor should these words be construed as a sort of prenatal obituary of the still non-existent organization that shall first see the light of day at St. Louis next month. We have denounced the aims of the leaders of the Temporary Committee solely in the hope that truly evangelical Christians may be warned of the peril.

What, then, should militant, uncompromising Christians at the St. Louis conference attempt to do? Certainly they can have no part in such an organization as Mr. Davis envisages. But if they can, by united effort, secure the adoption of a doctrinal basis that means something, and that cannot be "interpreted" to mean something else, and if they can see to it that the testimony of the meeting is topped by a clear declaration of war—total war—against the Federal Council and the forces it represents, then they, as loyal Christians, may well unite their strength in the accomplishment of the legitimate aims of the new organization. But if they should fail in their efforts to purge out the leaven of compromise, true Christians who hold dear the commands of their Lord should withdraw without a moment's hesitation. That much certainly is clear. If such withdrawal becomes necessary, and they cannot conscientiously ally their strength with that of the American Council as it is now constituted, we believe they should seek to have that Council exchange its leadership for one in which conservative, evangelical Protestantism can place its confidence. But above all they should remember that the pathway of compromise can never be traveled by the true Christian. Loyalty to his Lord demands that he never cease to contend earnestly for the faith; it is our prayer that the St. Louis conference may be dominated by such earnest contenders.

—T. R. B.

CALVINISTIC CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN GRAND RAPIDS

THE Second American Calvinistic Conference will be held from June 3rd to 5th at Grand Rapids, Michigan, in the buildings of Calvin College and Seminary. The subject about which the entire conference will center is the Word of God.

The program will cover three evening meetings and two morning and afternoon sessions. The general public is invited to attend the evening meetings, which will be of a more popular nature than those held during the day. The program has been tentatively announced as follows:

Wednesday Evening, June 3: Dr. Harold J. Ockenga, of Boston. The Keynote Address on "The Word of God".

Thursday Morning, June 4: Professor Louis Berkhof—"What is the Word of God?"

Thursday Afternoon, June 4: Dr. Henry Stob—"The Word of God and Philosophy".

Thursday Evening, June 4: Dr. Oswald T. Allis—"Present-Day Use of the Bible".

Friday Morning, June 5: Dr. John De Vries—"The Word of God and Science". And Dr. Leon Wencelius—"The Word of God and Culture".

Friday Afternoon, June 5: Professor Thomas E. Welmers—"The Word of God and Education".

Friday Evening, June 5: Fellowship Banquet—Talks by representative men.

The first American Calvinistic conference was held in Paterson, N. J., in June, 1939.

A committee, representative of various Calvinistic groups and churches throughout the land, has carried forward preparations for the 1942 conference. The basis of fellowship is not denominational or ecclesiastical. It is simply that of historic Calvinism as expressed in the classic creeds of Reformed Christendom. The meetings will be open to everyone, and there will be no fee of any kind. Headquarters of the conference will be Calvin College and Seminary, and free lodging will be furnished to those who make application in advance. Those who desire further information are requested to correspond with the Rev. L. Oostendorp, Secretary of the Second Calvinistic Conference, 108 Greenwald Street, Battle Creek, Michigan.

The Parables and the Second Coming

Amillennialism in the New Testament: Part VI

By the REV. ROBERT STRONG, S.T.D.

Pastor of Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Willow Grove, Pa.

THIS article begins the discussion of the leading advent passages of the New Testament. First, the teaching of our Lord will be studied. Then reference will be made to certain passages in the Book of Acts. The prophecies of Paul will be treated, and the eschatology of Peter will be analyzed. Consideration of the Book of Revelation will follow.

It may be well here to state why it is deemed advisable to reserve the Book of Revelation until the end of the studies. This book is the constant resort of premillennialism, and to some it might consequently appear to require early attention. A basic principle of Biblical interpretation indicates otherwise, however. Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, a premillennialist, recognizes and states this principle when he writes: "It is a sound rule of Scripture interpretation that the didactic and historical ought to be used to interpret the figurative and apocalyptic". The Book of Revelation is certainly apocalyptic in form, and it undeniably contains a great deal that is figurative. The didactic (fitted to instruct by the very plainness of the language) sections of the New Testament must, then, be the primary source for the outline of any doctrine. Because the Bible is a divinely inspired book it is consistent with itself. The teaching of the didactic portions of the New Testament may confidently be expected to be capable of satisfactory harmonization with apocalyptic material. The order of treatment, however, logically must be first the plain, didactic teaching, and then the apocalyptic. The sense of the didactic teaching of Scripture is normative for the interpretation of apocalyptic sections.

A convenient starting-point in the teaching of Christ on the last things is the parable of the wheat and the tares, recorded in Matthew 13. It is true that some of our Lord's parabolic utterances are not easy to interpret, so that the general rule is often quoted about them that a parable is to be understood as teaching one central truth, the details of the story not

themselves admitting of interpretation but serving the purpose of making the story vivid. In the case of the parable of the wheat and the tares such a rule does not apply, however, for when the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field", their Master gave them a detailed interpretation. There can of course be no question but that Jesus' explanation is authoritative and final. He thus explained the parable to His disciples:

He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world [age]. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Almost exactly parallel to this statement of events to come is the explanation Jesus gave of a closely-following parable—the parable of the drag-net. For the purpose of comparison it may well be quoted here:

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world [age]: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

There is wide agreement about the meaning of the parable of the wheat and the tares, as should be expected when our Lord Himself gives the interpretation. Dr. Buswell says in his book, *Unfulfilled Prophecies*, defending premillennialism: "Among amillennialists and premillennialists the par-

able of the wheat and the tares is believed to offer the key to the development of world history in general between the time of Christ and his return". Similar is the understanding of Dr. Feinberg, who says:

The parable reveals that professing Christendom will be the sphere of activity, not only for the Son of man and His servants, but also for the devil and his emissaries. Good and bad will be found in the kingdom in its mystery form from the beginning to the end. Only the harvest in a coming day will reveal who are the good and who are the bad.

The famous commentator Alford's understanding of the parable is as follows:

In the parable the Lord gathers as it were the whole human race into one lifetime, as they will be gathered in one harvest, and sets forth that as simultaneous, which has been scattered over the ages of time . . . The parable sets forth to us the universal sowing of Good Seed by the Gospel: it sows no bad seed: all this is done by the enemy . . . It is not the office . . . of the servants to collect or root up these tares . . . this is reserved for another time and for other hands,—for the harvest, the end; for the reapers, the angels.

In spite of the wide agreement that in this parable the course of the present gospel age is pictured, there is sharp disagreement among interpreters as to its bearing upon the millennial question. Premillennialists will be found again and again using the parable as an argument against the common postmillennial position that the world will be converted. Postmillennialists urge the passage as an insuperable obstacle in the way of placing an earthly millennium after the return of Christ.

Representative of the premillennialist use of the parable is S. H. Kellogg's argument:

The doctrine of a millennial age of righteousness before the Advent is also directly contradicted by the uniform teachings of the New Testament as to the character and history of this present age or dispensation . . . We are told that God's wheat, the true children of the kingdom shall "grow"

. . . But nowhere is it taught that this will ever have the effect of changing the dominant character of the present age . . . If it is said by Christ that during its course His "wheat" will grow, He also said, in the same sentence, that the "tares", too, shall grow. That is, as God's people, so the children of the Wicked One shall develop their character till the harvest.

J. H. Brookes in the same manner laid insistent emphasis upon the continuing presence in the world of the tares, or children of the wicked one: "the visible organizations for carrying on the work of the Lord, once corrupted, will remain corrupt until the end of the age or dispensation". The idea of an age of universal righteousness before the coming of Christ, Brookes reasoned, becomes impossible.

The postmillennial treatment of the chiliastic interpretation is equally severe. David Brown insisted that nothing can be clearer than that the separation of the tares from the wheat indicates "an absolute and final separation". There is therefore no possibility of a millennium to follow the coming of the Lord. In defense of postmillennialism, Brown maintained that the presence of "tares" in the church does not militate against the idea of a converted world inasmuch as postmillennialism admits that by no means is every professing Christian a true Christian.

The contention of premillennialist against postmillennialist admits of no favorable solution, I think, for either, for each brings a telling argument against the position of the other. Brookes unwittingly suggested the way out when he said, "These passages [Old Testament prophecies of universal blessing] and many more like them, when studied in the light of the parable of the tares, force upon us one of two conclusions: either Christ will come in person before the Millennium, or there will be no Millennium at all".

Attending to the Scripture text itself, the student must be impressed with the plausibility of the second alternative mentioned by Brookes. As practically all interpreters seem to agree, the parable sets forth the progress of events in this present gospel age. Although some would limit the scene described to apply it only to the visible church, and although others would hold that the whole world is in view—as indeed would appear to be required by the fact that our Lord

Book List

DUE to unusual demands upon space in this issue, the list of books now available in the Christian Book-of-the-Month Club is not repeated in this issue. Please refer to the preceding issue for the complete list.

plainly said, "The field is the world"—the point of principal interest is more than clear. The parable brings us in time to the very coming of Christ. It is immaterial that some premillennialists see His coming here as "the rapture" and some as the visible, so-called "post-tribulation revelation". To the premillennialist this coming is definitely before "the millennium". With this made plain, it is difficult indeed to see how the conclusion can be escaped that the parable of the wheat and the tares simply will not harmonize with the premillennial scheme. For the harvest, as Jesus in detail describes it, eliminates completely from the scene all the children of the wicked one. Where then shall be found those hosts of the unregenerate over whom Christ and the saints are, according to the premillennial view, to hold temporal rule during the millennial kingdom?

An interesting attempt to escape the force of this almost obvious consideration is made by the *Scofield Reference Bible*; in a note on page 1016 it is said that the gathering of the tares into bundles for burning does not imply immediate judgment. At the end of this age the tares are set apart for burning, but first the wheat is gathered into the barn. The sufficient comment upon this suggestion is the word of Jesus which soon follows the account of the gathering into bundles: "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world [age]". A plainer answer to the *Scofield* footnote could not be sought than the words with which Jesus continues: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; then shall the righteous

shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father".

The Saviour's words make it evident that the consummation of the age and the coming of Christ have specific and final reference to the unsaved; they are to be sent into that judgment which is fitly called a furnace of fire. The idea is the very same when Jesus comments on the parable of the dragnet: "So shall it be at the end of the world [age]: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth".

I have no hesitancy in saying that these two parables we have considered definitely controvert premillennialism. In language that is plain beyond cavil, Jesus rules out the possibility of a millennium of blessing for an unbelieving world, a millennium to follow upon His second coming. As it is not contemplated in these parables that the world will be converted, neither is it true that they teach that the end of the gospel age brings to the wicked anything but immediate and everlasting judgment.

Let us now consider still another parable that deals with the things of the end. It is recorded by Luke (19: 11-27) and is called the parable of the pounds.

Jesus gave this parable as He was approaching Jerusalem to attend His last Passover and, at the feast-time, to offer Himself up as the sacrificial Lamb of God. The reason given for the parable is that Jesus' disciples thought that "the kingdom of God should immediately appear". In the parable a certain nobleman, who is of course Jesus Himself, went into a far country to receive a kingdom and to return. His servants were left each with a sum of money to use in trading for their master's interest. But the citizens of this nobleman "hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us". Finally, having received the kingdom, the nobleman returned to take account of his servants, whom he rewarded according to their faithfulness. Concerning his enemies he said, "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me".

The interpretation of this parable seems to present no problem, insofar as its main outlines are concerned. It

is evident that it was given by our Lord to counteract the idea held so persistently by His disciples that He would very soon set up an earthly kingdom. He would make them see that His dominion of physical power was not to be exhibited for some length of time. All interpreters agree about this. C. I. Scofield, for example, gives the parable the following paragraph heading: "The postponed kingdom". By this he means that the personal reign of Jesus Christ on earth was postponed by Jesus because the Jews rejected Him as their Messiah. Objecting to the extreme dispensationalism that asserts itself in this view, I do agree indeed that the Lord taught that there would be an interval of some years between His coming in humiliation and His return in glory. It also would seem to be clear that the parable gives in a few broad strokes a picture of the course of the age intervening between the first and second advents of Christ and of the main events that will occur at the close of the inter-adventual period. Among the servants of Christ, it is taught, will be seen during the time of His absence from the earth both faithful, diligent men and those who are slothful. The rest of mankind are those who in the parable say, "We will not have this man to reign over us". So that the world contains the two classes of men: servants of Christ and rebels against His authority.

Let now be noted what is given concerning the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. When the Lord comes back, having received His kingdom, He takes account both of His servants and of those who have opposed His rulership. The former He rewards according to their desert. Up to this point premillennial and amillennial interpreters quite agree. Premillennialists are quick to point out that this parable definitely opposes modern postmillennialism, saying, as Brookes does, "The parable which confessedly spans the whole interval between the first and second advents gives no hint that all, or that even the greater part of the race will be converted. On the other hand, 'His citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us'." But premillennialists are not so quick to see that this parable no less thrusts against their own view than against the postmillennial view. For when the Lord comes, He not only

rewards His servants, but also commands those who have rebelled against Him to be slain! Once more is it taught that the coming of the Lord means the final judgment of the wicked.

It should be apparent that there is complete correspondence between the teaching of the parable of the wheat and the tares and that of the parable of the pounds. The latter no less than the former excludes the millennial ideas of the chiliasts. The slaying of the enemies of Christ is clearly coincident with His return in power. And so again I ask: Where then shall be found those vast hosts of the unregenerate who, according to premillennialism, are to be subject to the rule of Christ and the saints during the millennium? That conception of the

thousand years of Revelation 20 is seen to be untenable. Here again is it indicated by our Lord that His coming is in the most absolute sense a consummating coming; beyond it there is no hope at all for the unbelieving. The coming of the Lord is for the blessing of His own people, but for the irrevocable doom of the wicked. I feel warranted in advancing the claim that the amillennial view of the Lord's return receives strong support from the parables of Jesus.

As a conclusion to this article may I be permitted to express the hope that at least this will be an outcome of the reading of it: a renewed realization of the urgency with which the gospel call sounds out and should be sounded out in this day of grace. Behold, now is the day of salvation!

Guilty Moab

A Meditation on Jeremiah 48:7

By the REV. BURTON L. GODDARD

AS THE traveler to the Holy Land stands on the western shore of the Dead Sea and gazes across the water, he is looking into the native land of Ruth the Moabitess. It appears as though the land is one of mountains which drop precipitously to the shores of the sea, but when one visits this ancient land, he finds it a high tableland, deeply carved by two rivers, the Arnon and the Zered. Like the Jews, the people who dwelt here in olden times were Semites. Their language and customs were much the same as those of Israel, but they had turned away from the worship of the God of Lot, from whom they were descended, and had gone away into idolatry and sin, worshiping Chemosh as their national god. Thus Ruth, in cleaving unto Naomi her mother-in-law and forsaking the land of her birth, was led to say, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God".

Moab's Cardinal Sin

This was what all the Moabites should have said, and they should have turned to the worship and righteousness of this God whom Ruth was now to serve. But instead of trusting the Lord, they depended upon their own abilities and resources in all things.

God was not ignorant of their course, nor did He leave them undisturbed in their self-complacency and pride. Isaiah had lashed out against these cardinal sins of Moab. Amos had warned of God's judgments against her. It was left for Jeremiah to seal the prophetic testimony against this self-sufficient people. And Jeremiah did just that. Lifting up his voice against the sinful nation, he cried, "For because thou hast trusted in thy works . . . thou shalt also be taken".

Moab was guilty before God in that she trusted in works. Were her borders attacked—she looked to her army for security. Would she overthrow the yoke of Ahab—mighty men were at her command. Did the bribery of Balaam fail—carrying out his further hellish schemes gave promise of success. Should their cisterns go dry—they would build better ones. Whatever their undertaking, they relied on it to succeed. If it failed, they turned to some other expedient. They had no thought of calling upon God to help them.

Chemosh, God of Works

But what of the nation's own deity, Chemosh? Did the people not trust in him? On the Moabite stone, which bears an inscription by Mesha, king of

Moab, this ruler says that Moab was oppressed many days "for Chemosh was angry with his land". Mesha attributes the deliverance of his nation to Chemosh. He tells of slaying the people of a city to please Chemosh. He declares that he set forth to war to do the bidding of Chemosh and that Chemosh gave him success. Surely it sounds as though Moab trusted in Chemosh, its god.

Moreover, in the case of King Mesha there is real evidence that he trusted, at least to some extent, in the god Chemosh. The Bible tells us that when the Moabites were in serious straits because of an attack by Israel that Mesha offered his son as a human sacrifice upon the city wall, presumably to appease the wrath of Chemosh and thus turn the tide of battle. Such an act would require definite faith in the god and his power.

What then shall we say? Did Moab divide her trust between her own works and Chemosh, her god? Precisely no, and for this reason—*Chemosh was a god of works!* The God of Israel was a God concerned with faith, righteousness, spiritual life, salvation. Chemosh was not so. Chemosh was concerned with the achievements of the Moabites. *Jehovah* was a true and living God who had revealed Himself to men. *Chemosh*, like every other false god, was a god of the imagination, built up by men's fancies to symbolize and typify their chief interest and coincide in character with their special desires. It is for that reason that no other so-called god was in character anything like Israel's self-revealed God.

Gods Like Chemosh

Trust in a god like Chemosh and trust in one's own works thus go hand in hand. Not many modern scientists are professing atheists. Nearly every one has his god, a god of achievement, a god like Chemosh. These gods are not the true God of the Bible, despite the general rejoicing in certain religious circles that "Science is now in harmony with Christianity". No, they are gods of works, gods fashioned to fit the ideals of men interested primarily in the achievements of man. There is no pretense that these gods come from the Bible; they come from the laboratory. If they rise above laboratory conceptions, it is only because the laboratory god fails to meet the needs of man's soul, and the imagina-

tion is pressed to enlarge the notion of god so that it will.

After all, there really is little difference whether one trusts merely in works or in a god of works as well. Not long ago, in a speech to the German nation, Adolf Hitler told his people that God would not help them unless they themselves took the initiative. Hitler has no other respect for God. For him, God is like Chemosh, a god of works. But is godless Russia worse? It openly trusts in works to the entire exclusion of any god whatsoever. The two are of one cloth, and both, like Moab, are guilty before God.

We turn from nations to individuals. It is easy to see the guilt and condemn Germany, Russia and Moab, but are our skirts clean? Have we not come somewhat under the impress of the spirit of the age in which we live, an age which more and more trusts in works and makes works its god? It would be truly remarkable if we had not.

There is a real tendency to make our God a god of works, to treat Him

only as one who grants requests addressed to Him, opens doors, heals the flesh, and gives success to our undertakings. We do not treat Him as an eternal Spirit, to be worshiped in spirit and in truth. We do not give Him our hearts. We do not really love Him. We are greatly lacking in living faith. We call Him by a different name, but He is only a "Chemosh" to us.

Have you made God a god of works? Then you, like Moab, actually trust in works. You, like guilty Moab, are under the condemnation of God.

I beseech you to turn to the fountain where all guilt may be washed away, the fountain of Jesus' precious blood which flowed from Calvary's cross. I beseech you to forsake your trust in your own abilities, to plunge a dagger into your pride and slay it once for all. I beseech you to come to Christ and seek His pardon. Trust in Him, not in works. God forbid that on the Judgment Day your name should be included with that of Moab and this sentence read: "Guilty! He trusted in works!"

Christian Liberty and the Rule of Conduct

By the REV. EUGENE BRADFORD

Pastor of Faith Independent Church, Fawn Grove, Pa.

ALL WHO believe in the doctrine of creation will readily agree that man was created to glorify God in thought, word and deed. Immediately the question arises, What standard directs man in the pursuit of this great aim? How may man regulate his deeds to be sure they are glorifying God? It goes without saying that man cannot glorify God unless he pleases Him, and he cannot please God without doing His will. In other words, the will of God is the standard according to which man must live if he hopes to

reflect the divine glory. In the Garden of Eden man was endowed with knowledge, righteousness and holiness. God's will was impressed upon his heart. He knew exactly what deeds would please God and what deeds would not please Him. In fact, one very specific condition was given whereby man would decide unreservedly whether he would glorify God or disobey Him.

The father of lies came to Eve and told her that God's word was not true and that she and Adam should not be subject to His will. He tempted her with the false promise that they would be as gods if they ate of the forbidden tree. Eve put the word of Satan on a par with the word of God and set herself up as a judge to decide which was right. Thus, exalting herself as God, she denied God as God. Little wonder that, having made her own mind the supreme judge, Satan's lie led her to do that very thing which God had forbidden.

The result of this terrible deed is not unfamiliar. Along with the guilt

Young People's Topics

THE article on this page will be an aid in studying the young people's lessons published by the Committee on Christian Education of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, which may be secured from the Rev. Richard W. Gray, 7 Franklin Avenue, Montclair, N. J. "Applied Christianity" is the subject being studied during March and April.

and pollution that overcame man, his conscience, though retaining a vague knowledge of God and His law, became corrupted. Man had shut out the divine illumination and now became obsessed with the idea that his own conscience was the infallible measure of morality. God's will, revealed in nature and in the human heart, was subordinated to man's sinful will. We might expect, as a result, that man would become utterly savage in his sinfulness and that all traces of civilization would vanish away. That would indeed be the case were it not for God's common grace which constantly restrains sin by preserving some trace of the law written in man's heart (Rom. 2:14, 15). Consequently very few men, relatively speaking, commit murder; ungodly men still have some respect for authority and for marriage. But that does not minimize the sinfulness of man's transgression of God's law, and eventually disregard for His word will culminate in utter moral barbarism and the destruction of this world. For as long as the will of God is displaced by the human conscience as the judge of morality, sin will increase.

The Authority of the Bible

Immediately after the fall of man, God revealed the message of redemption. According to this message, God would provide a deliverer in the person of the Messiah who would not only atone for the sins of the elect, but, through His Spirit, would also enlighten and strengthen them so that they could live according to the will of God. Eventually this message of redemption was recorded by men who were moved by the Holy Spirit. Thus the written Word of God, the Bible, became the supreme rule of faith and practice. Through it the people of God are given "repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" (II Tim. 2:25, 26). "He sent his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions" (Psalm 107:20).

This assertion that the Bible is the supreme rule of faith and conduct is one which does not receive wide acceptance in the present day. What is the basis for such an unpopular dogma? The Bible can only be given such a high place in the affairs of men if it is regarded as the very Word

of God in distinction from all purely human writings. While it does not fall within the scope of this article to discuss in detail the authority of the Scriptures, it must be stated as a fundamental principle that the supreme authority of the Bible rests upon the fact that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (II Tim. 3:16). This is the Bible's own testimony as to its origin; unless it is credited as true in this respect, it must be rejected as false in all respects. But God has authenticated the claims of the writers by accompanying their teaching with "signs and wonders and divers miracles" (Heb. 2:4) the like of which have not been performed since. However, the Christian's full persuasion of the divine authority of the Bible rests on "the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts" (Westminster Confession of Faith I:5). It is because this inward testimony of the Holy Spirit is lacking in the hearts of unregenerate men that the Bible is not regarded by the world at large as the infallible rule of faith and practice. But when the Christian, whose mind has been illumined by the Holy Spirit, reads "Thus saith saith the Lord", he believes and endeavors to obey.

A logical implication of the authority of the Scriptures is the sufficiency of the Scriptures. If the Bible is authoritative, it must be sufficient to meet all the practical problems that arise from time to time. Of course it is not meant that the Bible commands in detail everything that the Christian is obligated to do, or that it explicitly forbids all that the Christian ought not to do. But it does prescribe principles by which his conduct is to be regulated, and specifies the kind of acts which those principles require or forbid. The moral law is summarily contained in the Ten Commandments, but it is enlarged, expounded, and illustrated throughout all of Holy Writ. It is enough, for example, that the Bible requires honesty in all relations, and that it gives numerous examples of how this command is to be observed. It need not be specified, therefore, that it is a sin to stuff the ballot-box. Regardless of how new any individual problem may appear to be, there is an answer for it if only the Christian will search the Scriptures.

The Perfect Law of Liberty

This exaltation of the Scriptures to

the place of absolute and final authority in the Christian walk is vitally connected with the doctrine of justification by faith and the believer's liberty from bondage to sin. In the Epistle of James the law of God (all of God's revealed will) is called the perfect law of liberty. Apart from faith in Christ the law only engenders bondage and convinces man of his hopeless condition. But when the believer has experienced the grace of justifying faith and has realized that Christ has met the law's demands for him, then the law no longer leads to bondage but, on the contrary, it brings a realization of liberty and is received by him with sincere affection so that he may lead a godly life according to its precepts. This is the burden of James when he says: "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:25). Being made free from sin, and having become sons of God, the Christian experiences true liberty in doing the will of God.

While the Christian will not consciously deny the authority of the Bible as the standard of conduct, he very often denies its sufficiency, and ultimately, therefore, its authority also. If it is denied that the Bible provides principles which serve as infallible guides to the Christian in all matters of conduct, then additional authorities must be brought into the picture. This is done, in fact, by many well-meaning Christians who would not knowingly deny the authority of the Word of God. Science, experience, and the "Christian consciousness" are used to augment the Bible. The things which science or experience have shown to be beneficial are regarded as binding the conscience. Certain practices which are looked upon as wrong by most Christians are considered sinful for all Christians. Such thinking is an outright denial of the sufficiency of the Scriptures. Man-made rules that are designed to bind the conscience were condemned by the Apostle Paul when he said: "If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, do ye subject yourselves to ordinances, Handle not, nor taste, nor touch (all which things are to perish with the using), after the precepts and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-

worship, and humility, and severity to the body; but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh" (Col. 2:20-23). Our Lord's condemnation of the Pharisees was even greater: "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mark 7:7). If the Scriptures be regarded as authoritative and absolutely sufficient for all the exigencies of life, it must follow that the Christian is free from all the commandments of men where such commandments are not authorized by the Bible. Since "there is one law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy" (James 4:12), the Christian dare not be bound by the judgments of men.

Being made free from slavish bondage to the law as the way of life, and from the wrath of God due to all who break that law, does not for a moment justify the Christian in believing that he may break the law. "What then? shall we sin because we

are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid" (Rom. 6:15). The Westminster Confession is eloquent on this point: "They who, upon pretence of Christian liberty, do practice any sin, or cherish any lust, do thereby destroy the end of Christian liberty; which is, that, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life" (XX:3) (cf. Luke 1:74, 75).

In Christ the Christian certainly is free from all the condemnation of the law. But he is not an unrestrained libertine. He is free to live for that great end for which he was created—the glory of God. He pursues that aim according to God's own will revealed in the Bible. That standard, given by inspiration of God, is absolute and final. It was designed so that "the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:17).

mediates and young people have benefited from a six-weeks' series of communicant classes conducted by the pastor. . . . March marked the first monthly meeting of the Fisherman's Club. . . . Nine members of the church are now members of the armed forces. A newly organized Central Oregon Gideon Camp is engaged in placing Bibles in the local hospitals, and supplying each man entering the service from Deschutes County with a Gideon Testament. Five men from Westminster Church are participating.

Presbytery of the Dakotas

FAITH Church, Wilton, N. D.: The Rev. C. A. Balcom has conducted a series of special meetings in all three of the fields he serves—Wilton, Baldwin and Rock Hill. He hopes in this way not only to reach the unsaved but also to build up the saints in their most holy faith.

The Rev. John F. Gray of Leith, N. D., has organized a Bible study group for children in the unchurched community of Thain. Permission has been obtained to use the public school building for classes, and at the first session thirty-seven attended. The group will meet each Monday afternoon. . . . A missionary society has just been organized at the church at Lark, N. D., and both men and women will attend the monthly meeting. New hymnals have been purchased by the congregation. . . . The missionary society at Carson has completed the making of a number of garments for infants and these will be sent to the Trinity Chapel of Newport, Ky., for the work of the Rev. and Mrs. J. Lyle Shaw. More than fifty people attended a Fellowship Supper at the Carson church on March 11th; dinner was followed by a social time. . . . In connection with a recent sermon on "The Inspiration of Scripture", each of the three churches served by Mr. Gray had a display of Bibles in more than thirty languages and dialects, as well as a number of old family Bibles. About twenty-five posters, lent by the American Bible Society, portrayed portions of the Bible in different languages, with a brief history of the translation of each. Included among the books lent by members of the churches were portions of Scripture given to relatives during the Civil War and a collection of Scripture verses published in Holland in 1635.

Orthodox Presbyterian Church News

By EDMUND P. CLOWNEY, JR.

Westminster Theological Seminary, Class of 1942

Presbytery of California

COVENANT Church, Berkeley: Along with Old Westminster Church, San Francisco, Covenant Church will entertain the spring Presbytery meeting in the week preceding Easter. Presbyterial and Machen League rallies are also scheduled for this time, with Dr. Ned B. Stonehouse, on leave of absence from his teaching at Westminster Seminary, addressing the public meetings. . . . The young people of Covenant church distributed a thousand *Home Evangels* during March and planned to conduct a service at the City Mission in Oakland. . . . Old Westminster Church has organized an additional Machen League for college age and older young people, with an initial attendance of fourteen.

Westminster Church, Los Angeles: The Rev. Russell D. Piper, pastor, is conducting a house-to-house canvass of the neighborhood in an effort to reach unchurched families. . . . Progress is reported toward the goal of \$100 for the building fund in this fiscal year. . . . The congregation further plumes itself on a contribution of more than

the quota of 150 a person a month to missions. . . . Dr. Ned B. Stonehouse was the preacher at a recent morning service.

Beverly Church, Los Angeles: "The Present Conflict in the Light of Japanese Religion and Ethics" was the subject of an address by the Rev. Floyd E. Hamilton, for twenty-one years a missionary to Korea, before the Men's Fellowship Club at its last meeting. . . . The Rev. Dwight H. Poundstone has commenced a series of morning sermons on the Ten Commandments. . . . Dr. Ned B. Stonehouse was a recent preacher.

Westminster Church, Bend, Oregon: At the request of a group in the unchurched rural district of Alfalfa, fifteen miles from Bend, the Rev. Glenn R. Coie, pastor, has begun gospel services in this community. In addition the pastor preaches bi-weekly at the Shevlin Logging Camp. . . . Scripture memory demonstrations, vocal and instrumental music, and talks by two young people made up a Sunday evening service conducted last month by the three young people's societies of the church. Juniors, inter-

Presbytery of New Jersey

COVENANT Church, Vineland: Three weeks of effort and a Loyalty Evangelism campaign are inaugurating the labors of the Rev. Everett C. DeVelde at Covenant. A week of special services, with Mr. DeVelde preaching, climaxes a week of cottage prayer meetings and a week of intensive visitation.

Calvary Church, Ringoes: Interest in catechetical learning flourishes as twenty-four of the young people engage in a catechism memory contest. The side which loses at catechism is to entertain the winner at a party. . . . Top to bottom refinishing of the church ended on the floor of the church auditorium which has just been sanded and varnished, according to the Rev. Bruce Wideman. . . . Recent speakers have included Mr. John Betzold, student at Westminster Seminary, and the Rev. Robert S. Marsden, missions secretary.

Faith Church, Pittsgrove: Mrs. Richard B. Gaffin brought the missionary message at the last open meeting of the Missionary Society of the church. An offering was sent to the foreign missions committee. . . . "A Major Christian Offensive" was the title of a recent sermon by the pastor on aggressive Christian work, stressing tract distribution.

Dr. Cornelius Van Til of Westminster Seminary spoke at the young people's conference on March 8th at Emmanuel Church (unaffiliated) of Morristown. At the communion service on the preceding Lord's Day, ten adults and three covenant children were received into membership.

Presbytery of New York and New England

SECOND Parish Church, Portland, Maine: The highest attendance mark in three years was reached in the Sunday school last month with 129 present. The school is sponsoring a Go-to-Church crusade, aiming to encourage attendance of its members at the worship service. Gratifying results are reported. . . . The church requests the names of members of the denomination serving in the Navy who may stop at Portland, and also the names of those in the Army stationed in Maine.

Covenant Church, Rochester, New York: Added emphasis on missions, in the form of one missionary sermon and offering a month, has increased

interest in missions and brought gifts to this cause to an average of 21.6 cents a member a week. . . . Blizzard blankets held down church attendance in past weeks but the annual every-member canvass was conducted with fine results, according to the Rev. Peter Pascoe, minister.

Calvary Church, Schenectady, New York: Four young people recently entered the church by baptism, one a converted Jew, and the other three from families which had never sustained church connections. . . . John Mark Meiners, son of the pastor, was baptized by the Rev. John H. Skilton. . . . The young people's chorus, the church choir, and soloists participated in a sacred musicale held on a recent Monday evening.

Presbytery of Wisconsin

OLD Stockbridge Church, Gresham: Banking on strong backs and elbow grease, the congregation has commenced work on the basement for a house of worship. Planning a stone church, the people are gathering the stone from nearby fields. The Rev. John Davies reports that the \$185 in the building fund will not be sufficient even for the lumber and cement required in a stone basement with roof, and adds that the Stockbridge congregation will be very grateful for any financial help from the Lord's people. . . . Scarlet fever and mumps have counteracted the benefits of a mild winter in the matter of attendance upon services and classes among the Stockbridgers and Menominees. . . . The spring meeting of presbytery is planned for April at Morgan Siding.

Four young people at Bethel Church, Oostburg, are preparing to be received as communicants, using the material by the Rev. George W. Mars-ton that appeared in the GUARDIAN. . . . Four men of the church are now in training camps and more will be called soon. . . . The Rev. Oscar Holkeboer reports that Grace Church of Milwaukee is continuing under the care of Elder G. Vander Kooi since the Rev. Leland C. Jorgensen has taken a charge in Canada.

Presbytery of Ohio

TRINITY Church, Cincinnati: A unanimous call was extended to the Rev. Marvin L. Derby, pastor of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church of New Haven, Connecticut, at a recent congregational meeting.

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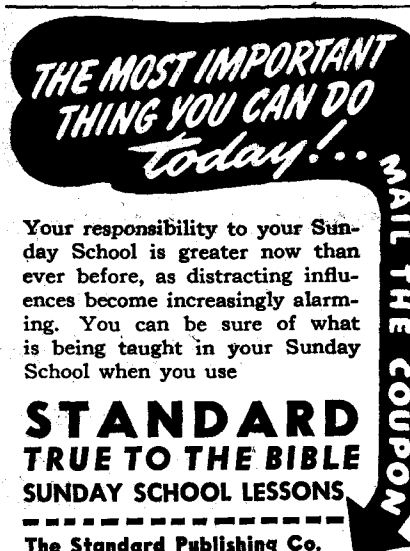
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Presbytery of Philadelphia

CALVARY Church, Germantown, Philadelphia: A building committee, with power to push the building program of the church to completion, was elected by the congregation at a special meeting on Wednesday, February 18th. It is hoped that building operations may be started in the very near future on the lot purchased by the church a few years ago. . . . On February 12th Calvary Church was host to a rally conducted by the Christian School Society of Willow Grove in the interests of the early founding of a Christian school in the suburban Philadelphia area. Dr. Cornelius Van Til presided, and the Rev. Edward J. Young spoke on the subject of "Christian Schools and Our Church". At the conclusion of the address, the meeting was thrown open for questions, and a lively interest in the subject evoked a helpful discussion.

Calvary Church, Willow Grove: New pulpit furniture and pews, venetian blinds and aisle carpets will furnish the church auditorium by Easter, reports Dr. Robert Strong, pastor.

Covenant Church, Pittsburgh: Afternoon Sunday school sessions now accommodate an overflow of children from the morning meeting. Twenty to thirty children have been attending, making a total enrollment of approximately one hundred. . . . Twelve persons acknowledged Christ as Saviour at a recent evangelistic service. Classes conducted by the pastor provide instruction for these new Christians. . . .

Mr. S. H. Davies was recently ordained as deacon. . . . The pastor, the Rev. Calvin Knox Cummings, and Mrs. Cummings are receiving congratulations on the arrival of Calvin, Jr.

MALE HOLDS SERVICES AT COLORADO CHAPEL

THE Rev. W. Benson Male, pastor of the Second Congregational Church of Denver, preached at four special services, from February 24th to 27th, at the Orthodox Presbyterian Chapel in the American Legion hut at Oak Creek, Colorado. Pastor of the Oak Creek congregation is the Rev. Clarence W. Duff. Mr. Male spoke on the question, "What Can a Man Believe?", and developed the four subjects of the Bible, Christ, Salvation and God.

The largest attendance was seventy, on the third evening of the series, when visitors were present from Yampa, Phippsburg and Steamboat Springs, and the young people of the latter church furnished special music. At the concluding service motion pictures were shown, depicting life at Camp Chief Yahmonite, the summer conference directed by Mr. Male.

STUDENTS' LEAGUE HOLDS PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION

THE Seventeenth Annual National Convention of the League of Evangelical Students was held in Philadelphia from February 27th to March 1st.

The Rev. John H. Skilton, Instructor in New Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary, addressed the Saturday evening meeting on the subject of Apologetics and Evangelism. Other speakers at the convention were: the Rev. G. D. Young of the Bible Presbyterian Church; the Rev. Percy B. Crawford, radio evangelist; the Rev. Charles Y. Furness, general secretary of the League; the Rev. Willard H. Wellman of John Chambers Memorial Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia; Bishop William Culbertson of the Reformed Episcopal Church; and Dr. Allan A. MacRae of Faith Theological Seminary, Wilmington.

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